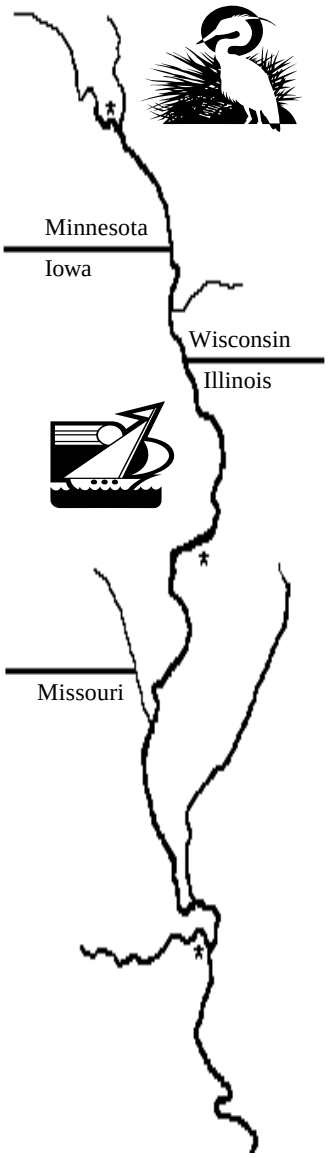
US Army Corps of Engineers

Upper Mississippi River - Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study

UMR-IWwS Navigation Study Newsletter September 1993 Vol. 1 No.2



Study Progress for the Navigation study:

Each work group with the study has made progress since the study was initiated. The engineering work group has begun work evaluating the reliability of the existing facilities for development of the baseline condition for the study. The economics work group has primarily focused on refining the economics computer models to be used in the study and obtaining the existing traffic information to be used in the models.

Work in the environmental area is proceeding. Several important elements of the environmental plan have been started, such as development of the physical model by the U.S. Army Engineer Waterways Experiment Station, and analysis of data collected by the Illinois State Water Survey. Initial efforts on the Adult Fish Study and the Mussel Assessment have also begun.

Progress will continue to be made and additional studies will be initiated soon. These include the Engineering work groups's evaluation of large scale improvements and the Environmental work group's studies: Fish: Early Life Stages and Fish Draw down.

Flood Fight '93

The "Great Flood of 1993" has taken its toll not only on the victims of this devastating flood, but on those involved in the flood fighting as well.

The disaster has touched on almost every aspect of Corps of Engineers duties. As many as 283 people from the Rock Island District, 78 people from the St. Paul District, and 324 people from the St. Louis District were involved in flood fighting. Almost every office in the three affected Districts participated in the effort. Additionally, Corps of Engineers employees from outside the Divisions were recruited to provide technical assistance. Even retirees were asked to return to provide assistance to the exhausted crew.

Providing pumps during the battle against the raging waters was one of the many critical tasks involved. The Corps of Engineers also provided sandbags and emergency flood engineering techniques. At last count, Rock Island District had distributed over 11 million sandbags; St. Paul District had distributed over 374,000 sandbags; and St. Louis District had handed out over 12 million sandbags.

Although the price of this battle against nature cannot be measured only in dollars and cents, the cost of flood fighting in the Rock Island District has reached over $6,400,000. In the St. Paul District, the cost was in excess of $711,000 and in the St. Louis District, where the fighting still continues, the cost is at nearly $6,079,000. However, as emergency status nears the end, levees and reservoirs on the Upper Mississippi River have prevented an estimated $4.9 billion in damages.

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Impacts from the Flood on Transportation

The impacts to the transportation sector from the 1993 Midwest flooding were massive and far reaching. Over 1,000 barges were stranded on the Upper Mississippi, Illinois, and Missouri Rivers, at a cost to the industry estimated at $700,000 per day. This did not include the barges amassed near Cairo awaiting the resumption of navigation. Several locks on the navigation system were closed during the summer months. The first lock closure came on June 24 at Lock 4. The system was not completely open until Lock 27 opened on August 20.

Many coal fired utilities that depend on river transportation seriously depleted their coal reserves. Some began to use more expensive natural gas.

Grain movements to the Gulf were cut to about 50% of their normal volume. This was in spite of increased shipments of Indiana and Ohio grain via the Ohio River and increased rail shipments on the Illinois Central. This severely depleted grain stockpiles at the Gulf and left many Midwest elevators overflowing and unable to move products. This shortage of grain at the Gulf was evident in the decreasing number of ships loaded for export each day. Some Gulf elevators responded to this shortage by closing for routine maintenance.

Flooding of key track and bridges crippled rail movements, especially in those states west of the Mississippi. Trains from the west coast were forced into circuitous emergency routing, adding as much as 10 days to shipments. This, in turn, caused rail car shortages.

One example of this difficulty was a grain movement which took place from central Iowa to the west coast via St. Paul, Chicago, and Memphis. It was reported that these types of diversions added as much as $20 per train mile to the cost of shipments.

Although truck transportation was more flexible than barge or rail, it was affected by bridge and road outages. Rerouting delayed many cross country movements by one or two days. Many local truckers in the flood affected area also had their operations adversely affected.

At one point on July 18, there were no bridges open between Burlington, Iowa, and Alton, Illinois, a distance of 183 miles. The bridge in Burlington was restricted to an eight-ton limit, which forced truck drivers to re-route 47 miles north to the Muscatine bridge. Persons living in one state and working across the river in another state were unable to get to and from work.

Even though the flood has receded, it will be some time before the nation's transportation system returns to normal operations. Many roads, rail lines, and bridges need repair. Even though normal operations are established on the navigation system, it may take a year or more to return bulk commodity inventories to their pre-flood levels.

Interactive 800 Telephone System

The Corps of Engineers established an interactive toll-free telephone number in May of this year to provide current information to those interested in the study and to gather comments and questions. The telephone system is designed to allow 24-hour, 7-day-a-week information exchange for persons interested in the Navigation Study. This telephone line is dedicated solely to the UMR-IWW Navigation Study. Callers can listen to pre-recorded messages from the different study disciplines and/or leave messages at any point while in the system.

The interactive telephone system has shown positive use and has given us a very easy medium for interested persons to voice their comments, concerns, or be added to the UMR-IWWS news-

letter mailing list. In the first four months, almost 250 people have used the system and the average length of calls is about 2 minutes. We have had several calls over 10 minutes in length. We will continue to monitor the use and comments, as this is a live link to the public.

The messages on the interactive telephone system are scheduled to be updated approximately every three months. This will allow the system to be used over and over by interested persons throughout the study. If you haven't called the system yet, give it a try by calling 1-800-USA(872)-8822.

Engineering Studies Update

The engineering work effort for Fiscal Year (FY) 1993 has focused on establishing the future investment schedule for operation and maintenance of the existing system of locks and dams. This will be accomplished using reliability based methodology for determining when lock and dam components reach their level of unsatisfactory performance. This will help define the "without project" condition, which assumes no implementation of large scale capacity expansion measures.

Beginning with FY 94 (October 1), engineers will initiate work on determining small and large scale alternatives for capacity expansion improvements. The small scale improvements will involve low cost alternatives such as traveling mooring bits or more efficient operating equipment or procedures. The large scale alternatives will include the feasibility of extending the existing locks or placing a new lock structure at either end of the existing structure, through the overflow section, through the existing dam, or in the auxiliary lock. This will establish preliminary cost estimates to compare alternatives for plan formulation.

Also in FY94 will be the initiation of construction of two hydraulic models that will be representative of the lower five sites specifically, and to a lesser degree to all sites upstream through lock and dam 11. These models will better define the feasibility and costs of the large scale and small scale enhancements. The accuracy of the cost estimate is critical to the system's evaluation that will determine whether or not added lockage capacity is economically justified on the Upper Mississippi River. The hydraulic models will also aid in the assessment of potential site specific environmental impacts.

The engineering work in FY94 and FY95 will be used initially in determining the National Economic Development Plan (NED) at the end of FY95. NED is development that will add to the overall economic output of the nation, not just a region or state. This engineering effort, plus the work in FY96 and FY97, will support the development of the Recommended Plan at the end of FY97 and the submittal of the draft System Feasibility Report.

Public Meetings to be Held

A series of public meetings have been planned for several months, but due to the severity of the flooding all along the study area, these meetings have been postponed. We believe that meetings about the scope of the study are needed and will give good insight to the public, but we want time for the flooded areas and communities to recover. Currently we are planning over a dozen small informative meetings in late October and early November along the study area. A special mailing for the meetings telling locations, dates, and format will be mailed in early October to all persons on the mailing list.

Summary of Comments

Comments received in response to the April newsletter have been similar to the concerns raised by the Reconnaissance Review Conference attendees and published in the newsletter. Forty-three percent of the responses were directed at study management and environmental issues. These comments expressed a need for additional studies in the environmental arena, the addition of the Missouri River to the study area, and the completion of the 2nd Lock POS and mitigation at Melvin Price.

Twenty-five percent of the responses addressed public involvement issues. Comments in this area provided positive feedback on the quality and content of the newsletter

Economics issues center on analyzing alternate modes of transportation.

As the study progresses, we will continue to keep you informed of all comments and opinions received, and of any action being taken as a result of the comments.

COMMENTS

Enclosed is a comment sheet. Please state any concerns you may have on the comment sheet, fold the sheet and mail it to the Corps of Engineers. No postage is due if mailed in the United States.

FUTURE NEWSLETTERS

Currently, newsletters are scheduled to be mailed three times a year. The approximate mail times are August, December, and April. These mailings will continue for the duration of the study and will contain information about study progress, findings, meetings, and feedback from the new interactive 800 telephone system.

Questions?

...for general study information, call Nelson J. Cordoba, study manager, at 309/794-5399 or write to the address below, ATTN: CENCR-PD-W.

...or for information on Public Involvement meetings, call the toll-free telephone number, 800/USA(872)-8822. Meeting announcements will be in the Public Involvement menu. Or call Kevin Bluhm, public involvement coordinator, at 612/220-0247 until October 15, after that the new phone number is 612/290-5247, or write to the address below, ATTN: CENCR-PD-C/Bluhm.

...if you want to be added to the mailing list for future newsletters, study updates, and meeting announcements, write to the address below, ATTN: CENCR-PD-C or call the toll-free telephone number and leave your information in the Public Involvement menu.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island
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P.O. Box 2004
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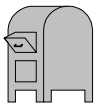

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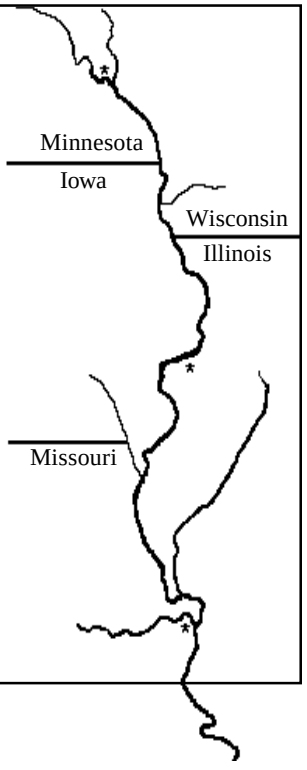


US Army Corps
of Engineers

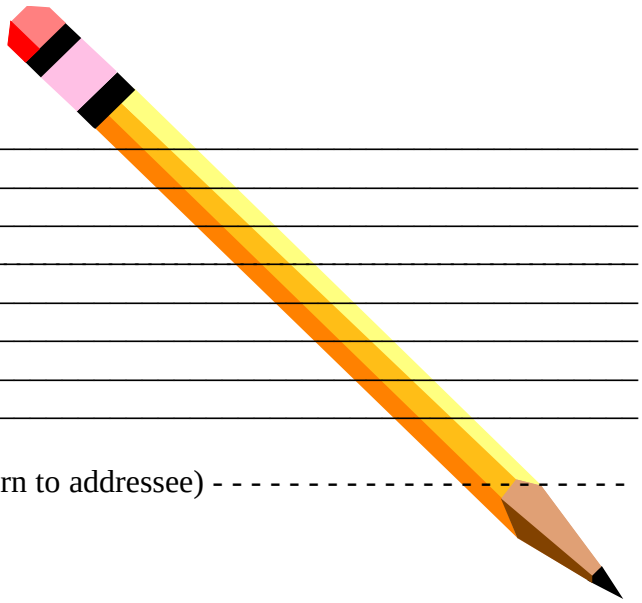
September 94

UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER - ILLINOIS WATERWAY NAVIGATION SYSTEM STUDY
COMMENT SHEET

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____



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(Continue comments here)

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Please check **ONE** category below that represents your primary interest in the study.

____ Waterborne Industry	____ Federal Government (Congressional)	____ Regional Planning
____ Other Business/Industry	____ Federal Government (All Other)	____ Recreation
____ Environmental Group	____ State Government	____ No Particular Affiliations;
____ Agriculture	____ City/County Government	Personal Interest
____ Media	____ Education	____ Other (specify)
		_____

Privacy Act Statement

In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (Authority: Paragraph 11, ER 1105-2-502), routine uses of the information obtained from this form include compiling official mailing lists for future informational publications and recording additional views and public participation in studies.

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